

Message Text

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14

ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 ISO-00 CAB-02 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00

 DOTE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 CIEP-01 FAA-00 IO-13 SY-05

 SCCT-01 SS-15 NSC-05 SP-02 L-03 TRSE-00 /069 W

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P R 310646Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9154

INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 6823

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EAIR KS

SUBJ: APPROACH TO ROKG REGARDING INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT SECURITY

REF: STATE 212490

1. EMBASSY RAISED INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT SECURITY WITH MOFA AMERICAN AFFAIRS BUREAU DIRECTOR PAK SANG-YONG AUGUST 30, AND URGED THAT ROKG REVIEW AIRPORT SECURITY MEASURES TO DETERMINE THAT THEY ARE THOROUGH AND IN CONFORMITY WITH ICAO STANDARDS. MR. PAK SAID HE WOULD PASS ON U.S. EXPRESSION OF CONCERN ABOUT THIS MATTER TO PROPER AUTHORITIES.

2. PRIOR TO APPROACH, EMBOFF DISCUSSED SUBJECT WITH ROK POLICE LIAISON OFFICER CAPTAIN PAK SAN-KYU WHO WAS UNTIL 9 MONTHS AGO CHIEF OF AIRPORT SECURITY DETAIL AT KIMPO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT. CAPTAIN PAK PROVIDED FULL RUNDOWN OF TRANSIT LOUNGE SECURITY PROCEDURES, MANY OF WHICH EMBASSY HAS VERIFIED BY
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PERSONAL OBSERVATION. ACCORDING TO CAPTAIN PAK, TRANSIT PAS-

SENGERS AND OUTGOING INTERNATIONAL PASSENGERS ARE PROCESSED THROUGH SAME LOUNGE AT KIMPO AIRPORT. HOWEVER, ABOUT THREE YEARS AGO ROK POLICE BECAME CONCERNED WITH POSSIBILITY THAT TRANSITING PASSENGERS MIGHT NOT GET SAME THOROUGH SECURITY CHECK AT OTHER COUNTRIES' INTERNATIONAL AIRPORTS AS AT KIMPO, AND INSTITUTE BODY AND HAND LUGGAGE SEARCHES FOR ALL TRANSITING PASSENGERS BEFORE PERMITTING THEM TO ENTER TERMINAL. AT THIS TIME ROK POLICE ALSO REQUIRED THAT PLANE CREWS MAKE ADDITIONAL BODY SEARCH OF PASSENGERS AS THEY ENTERED AIRCRAFT, BUT COMPLAINTS FROM PASSENGERS FORCED TERMINATION OF THIS PRACTICE AND SUBSTITUTION OF FULL SURVEILLANCE AND CONTROL OF ALL TRANSITING AND BOARDING PASSENGERS BY ARMED PLAINCLOTHES POLICE OFFICERS FROM TIME OF INITIAL BODY SEARCH TO TIME THAT PASSENGERS ENTER AIRCRAFT.

3. EMBASSY OFFICERS HAVE FREQUENTLY OBSERVED AIRPORT SECURITY PROCEDURES AT KIMPO AND ARE PERSUADED THAT ROK SECURITY METHODS ARE INDEED THOROUGH. ALTHOUGH TRANSITING AND OUTGOING PASSENGERS MINGLE FREELY IN INTERNATIONAL DEPARTURE LOUNGE, BOTH SETS OF PASSENGERS ARE SUBJECTED TO BODY AND VISUAL LUGGAGE SEARCHES BEFORE THEY ARE ABLE TO ENTER LOUNGE, AND ARE INDEED SUBJECT TO CLOSE CONTROL AND SURVEILLANCE THEREAFTER UNTIL THEY ENTER THE PLANE. (WE HAVE NOT ACTUALLY OBSERVED BODY SEARCH FOR TRANSITING PASSENGERS, BUT ASSUME IT IS, ON BASIS OF DESCRIPTION GIVEN BY CAPTAIN PAK IN PARA 2 ABOVE, SAME AS THAT FOR BOARDING PASSENGERS WHICH WE HAVE OBSERVED.) IN VIEW OF FAIRLY CONSTANT STATE OF EMERGENCY WHICH PREVAILS IN ROK AS CONSEQUENCE OF CONCERN ABOUT NORTH KOREAN THREAT, AIRPORT SECURITY IN ROK IS EXTREMELY HIGH AND MAY BE THE BEST IN NON-COMMUNIST ASIA.

4. ROK HAS RATIFIED 1970 HAGUE AND 1971 MONTREAL CONVENTIONS.
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